

## SMALL CITIES' ★ CORNER

### PROFILE IN PUBLIC SERVICE: KERRVILLE MAYOR JACK PRATT

By **Rachael Pitts**, TML Deputy Executive Director, Affiliate and Member Services

**Rachael Pitts:** Tell me a little about yourself.

**Mayor Jack Pratt:** I grew up in Corpus Christi. I am a U.S. Army Vietnam Veteran. My wife, Missi, is a retired principal. I enjoy fishing, golfing, wood work, and antique cars.

**RP:** How long have you served in city government?

**JP:** I have served almost four years as Kerrville's mayor and have served two years on the Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District Board of Directors.

**RP:** Why did you run for mayor, and what motivates you to stay in office?

**JP:** I became involved due to a desire to serve the public and improve the lives of my fellow citizens. Since taking office, we have made great strides in public safety, quality of life, economic development, and protecting our water supplies. Even having accomplished so much, there is still a lot to do, and I remain as committed as ever to my original goals.

**RP:** What is the best part about being mayor?

**JP:** It is extremely gratifying to be part of a team that has been able to make such major strides and accomplishments benefiting many future generations of Kerrvillians.

**RP:** How has public service changed you personally?

**JP:** Through nearly four years of service as a local elected official, there has been an amazing dialogue from all types of constituents on all manner of needs and issues. This has shifted some of my personal paradigms and helped me to grow in unexpected ways.

**RP:** What are the city's most pressing issues?



**JP:** Our top four priorities are our citizens, public safety, economic growth, and water.

**RP:** What are your goals for the city?

**JP:** The City of Kerrville looks forward to a host of projects that will enhance the quality of life, capture water resources, improve roadways, and increase efficiency. In the long term, we are working towards converting effluent water to drinking water, planning for growth, and building an indoor aquatic center.

Our city council goals are:

1. Understand our citizens' wants and needs.
2. Deliver quality municipal and public safety services in a cost-effective manner.
3. Be good stewards of public resources and assets through strategic planning and sound financial policies and practices that ensure fiscal sustainability.
4. Plan, maintain, and upgrade public infrastructure and facilities.
5. Create an economically-balanced community that provides for sustainable growth and protects cultural, recreational, and natural resources.
6. Engage in mutually beneficial relations with other governmental agencies.

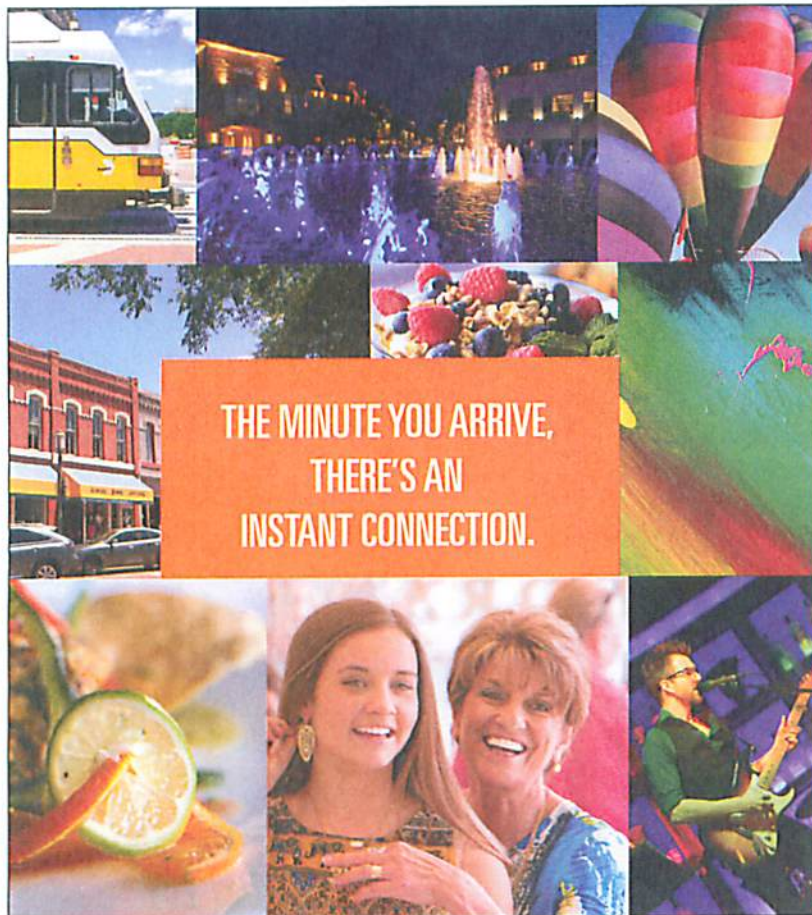
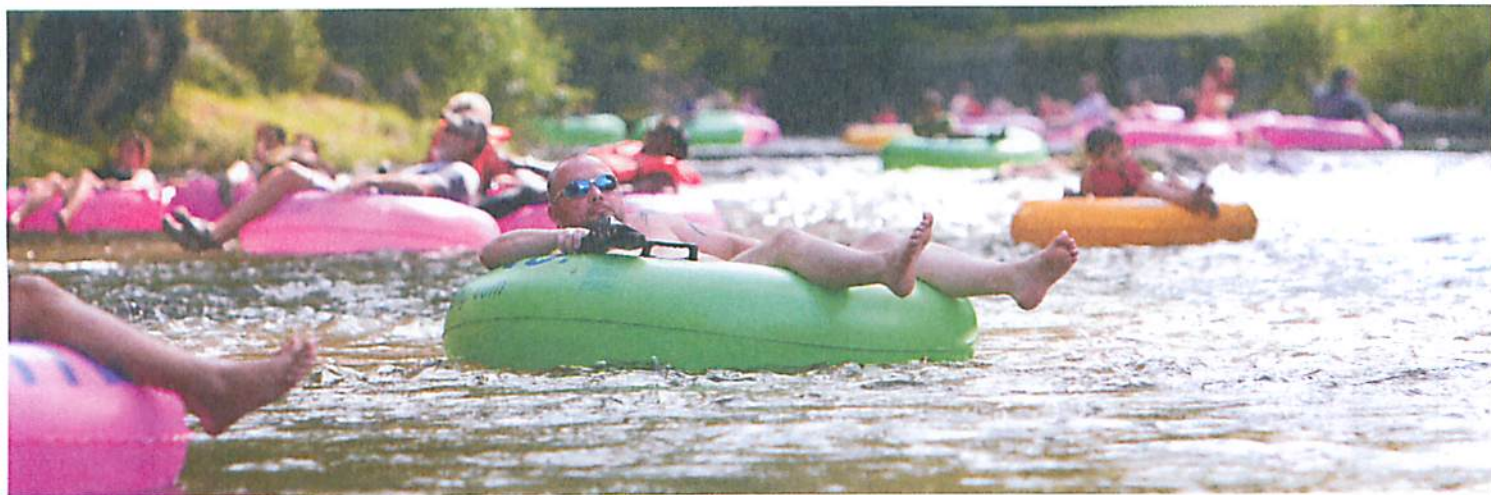


**RP: What projects are underway in Kerrville?**

JP: We are planning for the future water needs of Kerrville including a 105-million gallon reuse pond project and looking at direct potable reuse. We are also in the final planning phase for a \$12 million sports complex for soccer and baseball.

**RP: What city projects are you most proud of and why?**

JP: It has been my great pleasure to be part of a city council that has completed about \$60 million in capital projects over the past several years, and there are nearly \$60 million more capital projects underway, including major additions to the city's water sources. All of these projects are very important in their own right, but the completion of the city's river trail and park improvements along the Guadalupe River have had the greatest visible impact on Kerrville. These improvements are a major regional amenity, and significant source of activity and pride for our citizens.



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**RP: What makes Kerrville great?**

JP: Kerrville is nestled in the valley of the Guadalupe River, surrounded by dramatic hills and rugged terrain. A rich history of commerce and the abundant natural beauty of the river, hills, and wildlife along with its great year-round climate make Kerrville a jewel of a place. It is perfectly situated for business and fun, and is the hub of everything that makes the Hill Country wonderful—shopping, dining, education, healthcare, and lodging. It is *our destination* for outdoor activities, entertainment, and three great golf courses. Sports and recreational facilities abound.

Kerrville is hub and home to world-class symphony orchestra, artists, artisans, and performers. Vibrant performing arts, folk art, art and music venues, restaurants, shops, museums, and galleries compare to Texas' largest cities. Diverse fine and casual dining and local specialties are offered in a rich array in the Kerrville area. Local wineries and craft agriculture combine to make the area an adventure in sights, flavors, and aromas.

Kerrville is an enterprise town. Wise infrastructure planning and a spirit of entrepreneurship make it a prime location for business and economic development. Its citizens enjoy the best in technology and utility services. Kerrville upholds a desirable essence of small town, yet all the lifestyle amenities we expect.

It is a welcoming, safe place for everyone and a great contrast to suburban and urban America. The educational opportunities in Kerrville, public and private—from pre-school programs to college post-graduate, trade and vocational training and life-long learning—are remarkable. These institutions open doors for everyone and make this a thriving community to live, work, raise a family, and visit.

**RP: What do you see as the most important issues facing local government?**

JP: Three big issues local governments are dealing with are keeping the federal government from messing with municipal bond legislation, protecting our water resources, and cyber security.

**RP: What is the most rewarding advice you have received?**

JP: The most rewarding advice ever received is to, "Just satisfy the Man Upstairs and do not let the ugliness of politics get you off track."

**RP: Why do you serve local government?**

JP: I am honored to have been entrusted by my fellow citizens with an important role in my local government. This honor allows me to productively use my skills and professional experiences, earned through many tough lessons, to the direct benefit of my fellow citizens. ★



**Vacancies on the Texas Municipal League (TML) Small Cities Advisory Council**

The TML Small Cities Advisory Council (SCAC) advises the TML Board of Directors and staff on ways the League's services to small cities can be expanded or modified, consistent with TML's resources and the needs of the organization as a whole. The SCAC meets three times a year, and is made up of a dedicated and diverse group of elected and appointed officials in cities with populations of less than 15,000 from each of TML's 15 regions.

**There are currently vacancies on the council that need to be filled by city officials in TML regions 6, 9, and 12.** To find what TML region your city is in, visit the TML website, [www.tml.org](http://www.tml.org), or refer to the *Texas City Officials Directory*.

Contact Gray Bulman with the League staff at [gray@tml.org](mailto:gray@tml.org) or 512-231-7406 for more information, or if you would like to be considered for a position on the SCAC.